



SHORT-TERM RENTAL UNIT PERMIT APPLICATION INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

A Short-term Rental Unit Permit (Permit), as required by Chapter 6, Article V of the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances, must be obtained prior to advertising, leasing or operating any dwelling unit as a Short-term Rental Unit (as defined below). To be processed, a Short-term Rental Unit Permit application must be completed in full, with all required supplemental information completed and attached with the submission. A separate application is required for each Short-term Rental Unit. *Note: Apply for a Home Occupation Permit if you intend to operate a Homestay Rental—the leasing of one bedroom within your home for less than 30 days.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

- a. For each dwelling unit to be rented, including accessory dwelling units, an initial application is required to register the unit and obtain a Permit; annual renewal of the Permit is also required.
- b. A Permit is nontransferable; a change of ownership of the Short-term Rental Unit shall require the new owner to obtain a new Short-term Rental Unit permit.

DEFINITIONS

- a. **Short-term Rental Unit:** A dwelling unit, principal or accessory, that is rented in its entirety to Transient Guests for less than 30 consecutive days.
- b. **Transient Guest:** A person who provides remuneration for lodging at a place other than his/her principal place of residence for a period of less than 30 consecutive days.

LOCATION AND CONDITIONS

- a. A maximum of one (1) Short-term Rental Unit is permitted per lot in the following zoning districts: Agricultural (AG), Rural Mixed-Use (RMU), Residential General (RG), Neighborhood Core (NC), General Mixed-Use (GM), Riverfront Edge Historic District (RV-HD), Neighborhood Conservation Historic District (NCV-HD), Neighborhood General Historic District (NG-HD), and Neighborhood Center Historic District (NCE-HD) as of January 1, 2021. This limitation shall not apply to lots within the Neighborhood Core-Historic District. Compliance with the Town of Bluffton Unified Development Ordinance and Chapter 6, Article V of the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances is required.
- b. Off-street parking shall be provided at a ratio of one (1) parking space per bedroom. Vehicles shall not block sidewalks.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The property owner or the Short-term Rental Unit agent designated by the property owner shall serve as the primary contact. A short-term rental agent who is not the property owner must obtain a Town of Bluffton business license. In the event of complaints, emergencies, maintenance issues, the primary contact will be contacted. The primary contact must be at least 18 years of age or older and must be able to perform the duties listed below:

1. Be available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week at the phone number(s) listed on the application;
2. Be willing and able to come to the Short-term Rental Unit property within one (1) hour following notification to address issues related to the property;
3. Be authorized to receive service of any legal notice on behalf of the owner for violations of the Town of Bluffton General Code of Ordinances and/or the Unified Development Ordinance;
4. Be able to produce copies of the executed rental or lease agreement for current occupants as needed; and
5. Monitor the Short-term Rental Unit at least once weekly to ensure compliance with applicable ordinances.



SHORT-TERM RENTAL UNIT PERMIT APPLICATION INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES (CONTINUED)

LICENSES, PERMITS, AND TAX RECEIPTS REQUIRED:

No person shall rent or lease a dwelling unit as a Short-term Rental Unit without initially and on a continuing basis:

1. Demonstrating proof of ownership;
2. Obtaining a Short-term Rental Unit permit from the Town of Bluffton;
3. An active business license from the Town of Bluffton (owner);
4. If the short-term rental agent is not the owner, the rental agent shall also obtain a business license from the Town.
5. Initial the Short-term Rental Unit Checklist;
6. Providing a Property Owners Responsibilities and Acknowledgement;
7. Providing a notice to adjacent property owners;
8. Submitting Accommodations Tax (ATAX), as applicable;
9. If the property is within a Planned Unit Development District, a letter of approval from the HOA or POA.

RENEWALS, TRANSFERS, AND MODIFICATIONS:

a. Renewals

All Short-term Rental Unit permit holders must apply annually for renewal of the Short-term Rental Unit permit.

b. Transfers

The sale or transfer of ownership of any Short-term Rental Unit property for which a permit has been issued shall immediately nullify that permit. To continue the operation, the new owner will be required to submit an initial application.

c. Modifications

A change in the Short-term Rental agent, an increase in the number of bedrooms or decrease in the number of required parking spaces shall not occur without approval of a new permit by the Town of Bluffton.

LIFE-SAFETY CHECKLIST:

- a. The Applicant will initial the Short-term Rental Unit Checklist in the permit application.
- b. The Town of Bluffton will not perform a building inspection of the Short-term Rental Unit; however, you are encouraged to have an independent inspection prior to the initial leasing of the unit, including deck, balcony and dock inspections, as applicable. You are also encouraged to check with your insurance company for possible requirements.

PERMIT & GUEST INFORMATION POSTING REQUIREMENT

The following documents must be posted in the Short-term Rental Unit in a conspicuous location (e.g., back of door of the main entrance, refrigerator):

- a. A copy of the Short-Term Unit Rental Permit;
- b. A "Guest Information" document that includes the following:
 1. The name, address, telephone number(s) and email address of the of the Short-term Rental Unit Agent;
 2. The business license number assigned by the Town;
 3. The maximum occupancy of the Short-term Rental Unit;
 4. The location of required parking spaces;
 5. Emergency numbers for local police and fire; and
 6. The schedule of solid waste and recycling pick-up.
 7. The location of the nearest hospital.
 8. A statement that that any sound that could be reasonably expected to create a nuisance or cause disturbance to the peace and enjoyment of neighboring properties will not be permitted and that "quiet hours" are between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. The Town of Bluffton will enforce its Noise Control Ordinance.